



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is *TransNet*?

TransNet is this region's ½-penny sales tax dedicated to transportation improvements. Money generated from this tax helps pay for highway, transit, and local street improvements throughout the region.

2. What is SANDAG?

SANDAG, the San Diego Association of Governments, is the region's planning and transportation agency responsible for major highway, transit, and other infrastructure projects. SANDAG is governed by mayors, council members, and supervisors from each of this region's 18 Cities and County government.

3. What is the duration and amount of tax?

- Original program: 1988 – 2008 = \$3.3 billion
- Extension program: 2008 – 2048 = \$14 billion

4. What has the existing *TransNet* program accomplished?

The program has delivered more than 60 miles of new or widened highways; 35 miles of new trolley service; 65 miles of Coaster and Sprinter rail service; services to improve and maintain hundreds of local streets and roads; the construction of regional bicycle projects; expanded bus and dial-a-ride services; discount passes for seniors, disabled passengers, and students.

5. Why do we need to pay this tax?

The tax provides the financial backbone to help San Diegans pay for critically needed transportation improvements. Our local dollars attract additional funding by being matched by state and federal dollars to improve the region's transportation system.

6. What's the role of the Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee?

To provide independent audits to analyze how *TransNet* dollars are being spent, to conduct performance reviews to determine how well the projects being implemented are meeting the objective of reducing traffic congestion, and to provide recommendations on how to improve the *TransNet* program's performance over time.

The Oversight Committee is made up of seven members with demonstrated expertise in engineering, architecture, municipal finance, real estate, construction management, environmental sciences, and large-scale private sector organization management selected through an open, public solicitation process. An independent Oversight Committee with this set of skills and experience will play a valuable role in ensuring that all voter mandates are carried out and in constantly looking for opportunities to improve and enhance the overall performance of the *TransNet* program.

7. But why do I have to pay a sales tax for transportation; don't I already pay at the gas pump?

At the gas pump you pay about 36¢ per gallon in gas taxes which go to federal and state governments. Most of those funds are returned to San Diego. However, these state and federal funds are insufficient to meet the region's needs for transportation infrastructure improvements. Further, as a per gallon tax, the revenue does not increase with increasing gas prices. We need a local transportation funding source to match these state and federal funds and to fund additional local transportation improvements. All *TransNet* dollars are generated locally and spent locally.

8. Why do I need to pay a transportation sales tax?

We need a dedicated, local funding source for our transportation system. *TransNet* helps to leverage federal and state funding to pay for critically needed transportation projects.

9. How does *TransNet* benefit me?

If you drive on the streets and freeways, take the bus, trolley, or Coaster, or ride your bike, chances are your *TransNet* dollars helped to fund these projects. If you are a senior, disabled or youth transit rider, your monthly transit pass price has been significantly reduced by *TransNet*.

10. Do other counties have a transportation tax?

Yes. Most urban counties have a dedicated sales tax for transportation. A total of sixteen counties around the state, including Los Angeles, Santa Clara, San Francisco, Sacramento, Riverside, and San Bernardino have a transportation sales tax. The total transportation sales taxes in these counties ranges from 1/2% to 1%. For example, Los Angeles has a 1 % sales tax dedicated to transit service.

11. How much goes to SANDAG for administration?

By law, no more than 1% of revenues generated go to SANDAG to administer the program. SANDAG Directors use at least 99% of the funding to implement the transportation projects and programs included in the ballot proposition.

12. Where does the *TransNet* money go?

Nearly all of the money is spent in the urbanized western third of the county where most residents live and work, and where most of the traffic congestion occurs.

13. What are Managed Lanes?

Managed Lanes are new freeway lanes within existing freeways. These new lanes are equipped with state-of-the-art technology, like moveable barriers, which could be shifted back and forth to add lanes in one direction or another as a way to respond to changing traffic conditions. The lanes would be open to transit, vanpools, carpools, and single-occupant autos with a toll as is currently done on the I-15 express lanes.

14. What are High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes?

High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes are exclusive lanes dedicated to vehicles that carry more than one occupant such as carpools, vanpools, and buses. State law allows motorcycles and emergency vehicles to use HOV lanes as well. HOV lanes typically provide higher operating speeds than a general purpose lane, especially during rush hours.

15. What are Reversible Lanes?

Reversible Lanes change directions each day. One or more lanes may be designed to be reversible so that additional lane(s) is/are provided in the congested direction of travel in the morning and then reversed to serve traffic in the opposite direction in the afternoon.

16. What is BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)?

Bus Rapid Transit provides high-speed transit connections across the region, using freeway, HOV, or Managed Lanes, and priority transit access along major surface streets. With service frequencies and passenger amenities similar to the trolley, BRT offers competitive travel times with cars, especially during commuter rush hours.

17. Who decides what to do with the funds?

The SANDAG Board of Directors decide based on the locally adopted Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is updated every three years.

18. Why are so much of the *TransNet* sales tax extension dollars going to fund public transportation operations?

The RTP outlines the development of a high-performing transit system that *TransNet* funds will support. The original *TransNet* sales tax helped fund trolley extensions from downtown San Diego to Old Town, through Mission Valley to connect with the existing East Line trolley in La Mesa, and from El Cajon to Santee. *TransNet* also helped fund the Coaster commuter rail from Oceanside to downtown San Diego, and the Sprinter rail construction from Oceanside via Vista, San Marcos, and on to Escondido.

The *TransNet* Extension will help pay for the ongoing operation and further expansion of the rail and bus services which have been put into operation since the original *TransNet* received voter approval 20 years ago. Research indicates the importance of frequent transit service, and

thus, less waiting time. The *TransNet* Extension will help fund a more robust transit network with more frequent services.

In addition, the *TransNet* Extension will fund the operating cost of the new express Bus Rapid Transit services and rail improvements proposed in the new measure. With state and federal funding focused on capital projects, the use of local *TransNet* funds for operations is critical if the region's transit system is to expand to serve a growing region. The *TransNet* Extension also will provide the funding needed to continue the reduced-price monthly transit passes for seniors, disabled, and youth.

19. How do you come up with the *TransNet* projects?

The projects listed in the both ballot measures were drawn from the Regional Transportation Plan which is developed through years of detailed planning studies and an extensive input and evaluation process that includes residents, businesses, environmental and community leaders as well as elected officials from the 18 cities and county government. In addition, extensive public surveys and focus groups were used to select the highest priority projects out of the Regional Transportation Plan.

20. Can SANDAG eliminate a transportation improvement project?

Yes. The *TransNet* program provides flexibility in case of changing technology, priorities, or other factors during the 40 year program. However, a major project change would require an extraordinary 2/3 vote from the SANDAG Board.

Other changes would require a vote of the people – such as

- a change in the sales tax amount
- a change in the duration of program
- a change in the independent taxpayer oversight committee
- a change in the environmental mitigation program
- a change in the requirements for private developer funding contributions

21. Who is my SANDAG representative? Isn't SANDAG just a bunch of appointed officials?

Your SANDAG representative is a mayor or councilmember from the city in which you live, or if you live in an unincorporated community, your representative is a member of the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors. The current SANDAG Board of Directors is listed at www.sandag.org. All voting members of the Board of Directors are elected officials representing the interests of their local community and the region as a whole at the SANDAG meetings. The SANDAG voting procedures include a weighted vote by population ensuring that your representative's vote is commensurate with the population of your community.

22. Why does the *TransNet* Extension required a \$2,000 fee for new home development?

Residents have told us that they want new growth to pay its fair share. The fee would be imposed by each city and the county government. \$2,000 is the minimum to help fund the construction of local roads that connect cities so drivers don't have to clog a section of freeway to get from one city to another. Many of these short trips are generated by residents. The \$2,000 fee collected from new housing units is expected to provide sufficient revenue to fund the needed improvements to our regional arterial system and reduce traffic congestion on our highways.

23. Where can I get more information about *TransNet* projects?

Visit www.KeepSanDiegoMoving.com

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